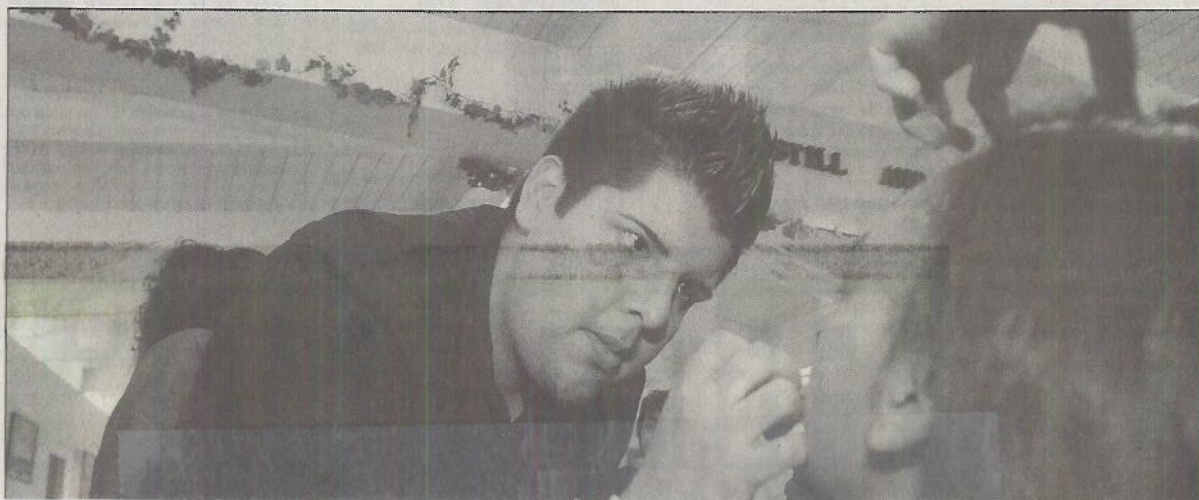


Sat 2-4-12 Daily Breeze

Working to change lives



Carlos Sandoval, left, applies makeup to a young woman at Downey's Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall. "I want to show them there are better things in life than what they've seen," said stylist Jovonna Moss who led the makeover team.

County offers Juvenile Hall girls makeovers and workshops

By Christina Villacorte
Staff Writer

Her arms covered with tattoos of gang insignias, the girl detained at Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall in Downey looked askance as makeup artists, hairstylists and manicurists bustled about.

She said nothing as they put blush on her cheeks, fixed her hair and loaned her a fancy outfit, showing her — for a moment — a better version of herself.

A smile completed the transformation.

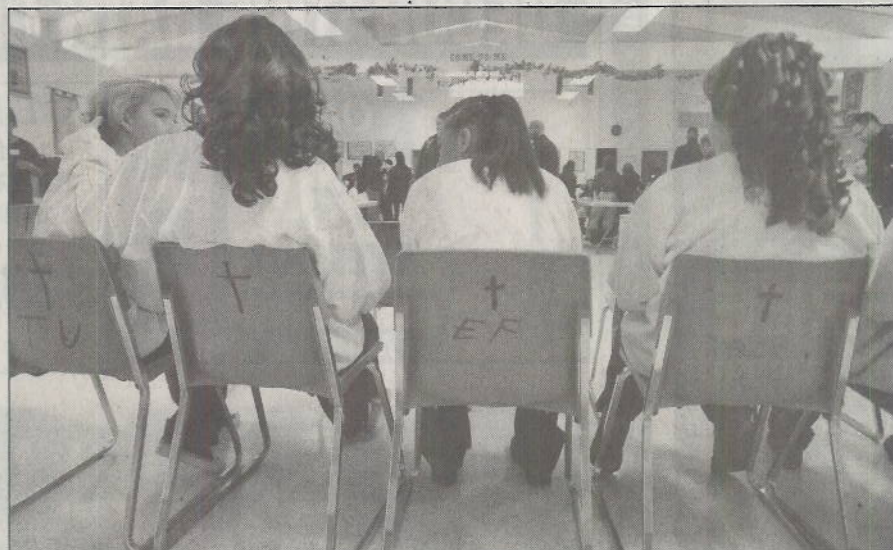
It was the culmination of a program called "Women Empowering Young Women from the Inside Out."

For a week, staffers at the county Probation Department have been holding workshops to help their wards gain self-esteem, learn proper ways to behave and identify abusive relationships.

Javier Hoil, detention service officer and program service coordinator, said the girls were in juvenile hall for a range of offenses such as truancy, gang-related crimes and human trafficking.

"We cannot motivate them, but what we can do is inspire them," he said.

On Friday, the girls were given the opportunity to glimpse their potential,



Juvenile detainees with new hairstyling and makeup wait for the next phase of the Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall's "Women Empowering Young Women from the Inside Out." The girls also attended workshops on self-esteem, dating and avoiding bad relationships.

thanks to the makeover team led by celebrity stylist Jovonna Moss.

"I know these young ladies are troubled, and they really don't understand that there really is a way out," Moss said. "I want to show them there are better things in life than what they've seen."

Her makeover team consisted of professional makeup artists, hairstylists and manicurists, as well as students at Pacific Beauty College, Marinello Beauty

Schools and Healthy Hair Academy.

They primped and pampered the girls and offered words of encouragement.

One girl said it made her realize that "more people care than what you may think."

Another girl whose frizzy blond and blood-red hair was tamed with a straightening iron could barely contain her excitement.

"I can't wait to look pretty," she said.

Asked what her favorite

part of the makeover was, she replied: "All of it."

The Probation Department barred the media from identifying the girls by name.

Volunteer hairstylist Nikki Blu felt moved.

"I just like to see them smile and know that they're getting something that they wouldn't normally get," she said.

Hairstylist Federico Remigio said he loved watching

MAKEOVER A5

Sat 2-4-12 Daily Breeze

MAKEOVER

FROM PAGE A3

the girls look in a mirror for first time after the makeovers.

"Their reaction at the end is the best part," he said.

About 60 girls received free makeovers. For many, it was their first time to receive such pampering.

One 15-year-old girl had

been to a prom but "never had my hair done or anything."

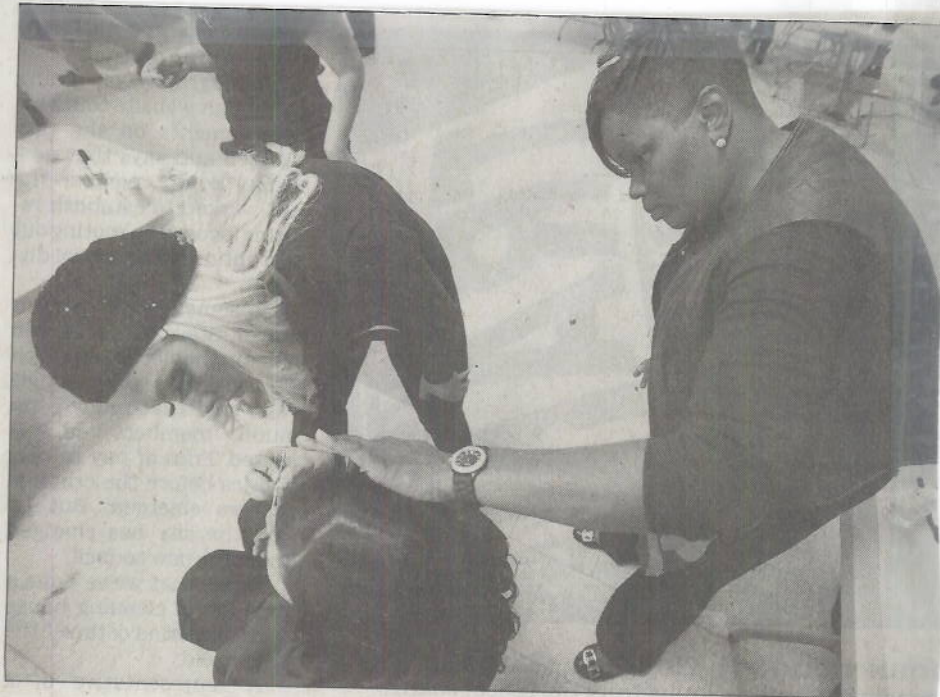
After her makeover, she said she "felt like Beyonce."

The girl with the tattoos was grateful.

"This shows that I can be much more," she said. "It makes me want to better myself."

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Follow Christina Villacorte on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/LADNvillacorte>



FRANCINE ORR Los Angeles Times

BEAUTY INSIDE AND OUT

Makeup artist Charleen Martinez, left, and hairstylist Danita Davenport work with a resident of Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall in Downey, the grand finale of a weeklong program aimed at teaching personal empowerment.

Sat 2-4-12 LA Times

WED 2-8-12 L.A. Times

Media gain access to L.A. County children's courts

Controversial ruling opens previously secret proceedings to public scrutiny.

GARRETT THEROLF
AND JOHN HOFFEL

Just days into an unprecedented effort to open Los Angeles County children's courts to the press, Judge D. Zeke Zeidler weighed the case of a young boy whose abuse injuries raised concerns that he might never be able to run again and have confined him to a medical facility for many months.

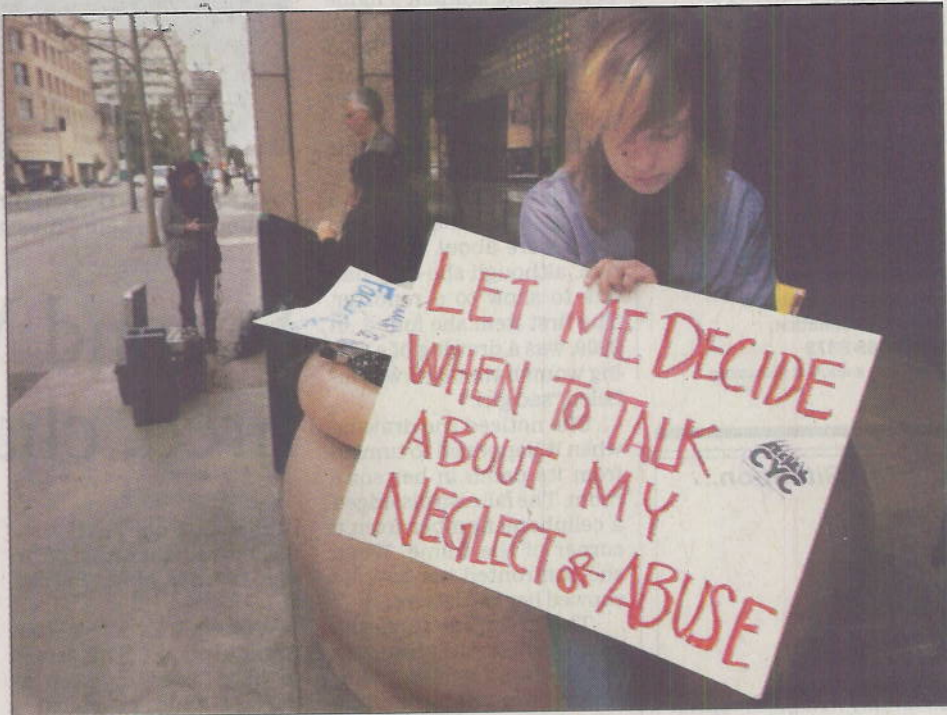
In a hearing Tuesday at Edelman Children's Court in Monterey Park — the sort of proceeding almost never viewed by the media or outsiders prior to an order handed down last week — the boy's lawyer reported that since being taken from his parents, the youngster has

made remarkable progress. He'd earned a reputation for being a "miracle child" who would someday "play like other kids," the lawyer told the court.

Zeidler then turned his attention to the boy's social worker, who was ordered last April to search simultaneously for a relative and a potential adoptive parent to provide a permanent home. When the case worker described her limited efforts to comply with the order, the jurist delivered a stern rebuke.

"You as the government have chosen to become vested with this child" by removing him from his home, Zeidler said. "But the court does not find that the department has provided sufficient services."

The exchange offered a highly unusual — and controversial — view into courtrooms filled with stuffed animals, coloring books and posters for children's mov-



MARK BOSTER Los Angeles Times

LUCIAS BOUGE, 19, a former foster youth, holds a poster on the steps of the 2nd District Court of Appeal, as he objects to the order opening court hearings.

ies. Children's court is an insular judicial world that has been criticized by parents for too often trampling their rights and by children's advocates for inadequately protecting young people at risk from potentially harmful living situations.

Children's Court Presiding Judge Michael Nash last week ordered those court-

rooms to be open to the press, except in cases when a judge finds that it would be harmful to the child involved. Nash argues that openness will bring accountability to the process and that his order implements a state law allowing people with a "legitimate interest" to attend court proceedings.

Social workers at the Los

Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services, elected officials and others have argued that the order overreaches and intrudes on the privacy of children who have already suffered mistreatment.

Pressing the issue Tuesday, the Children's Law Center, which represents most

[See Courts, AA2]

WEA 2-8-12 LA Times

Media access controversial

[Courts, from AA1]
children in the system, asked the state appeals court to immediately overturn Nash's initiative.

The lawsuit claims Nash's directive conflicts with state law and violates the rights of children to confidential proceedings.

"The court has put the needs and interests of the public and the media ahead of the victims of child abuse and neglect," Leslie Heimov, the law center's executive director, said at a downtown news conference. "A judicial system that fails to respect the privacy and dignity of the children it claims to serve has lost sight of its mission."

Heimov said in the county's fast-moving juvenile courts, lawyers are dealing with eight to 10 clients a day and cannot be expected to notice reporters and always be prepared to argue why they should be excluded. A separate court-appointed law firm that represents parents in the county's child welfare system also is expected to appeal Nash's open-access order.

The presence of a Times reporter in courtrooms this week brought varied reactions.

Dozens of attorneys representing parents, children and the county were dispatched to the sessions. In Judge Rudolph A. Diaz's courtroom, cases virtually ground to a halt. Attorneys raised a series of objections, including challenging the re-

porter's presence during a discussion of the day's calendar.

Diaz postponed several hearings until the legal issues are clarified. After seeking legal briefs from the lawyers, he sent parents and children home with orders to come back another day.

By contrast, objections were quickly overruled in Zeidler's courtroom. The judge said lawyers had not demonstrated that a reporter's presence would be detrimental to the children involved. The handling of cases proceeded without delay.

"I think everyone is freaked out because this has only been in effect a couple of days," said Kenneth Krekorian, executive director of the law firm representing parents. "This is a big change for how things have historically happened."

Krekorian acknowledged that some lawyers were objecting to media presence without checking with their clients. He said he had advised his attorneys to consult with their clients before acting.

"How can you object without any direction from your client?" Zeidler asked one attorney. "Maybe he's a parent who doesn't feel he is getting adequate services, or maybe he feels his due process rights are being trampled and wants someone to know."

After Zeidler's hearing, the interim director of the county's child welfare agency said he would look into the judge's complaint about efforts to find the injured boy a permanent home. "I am always concerned when I hear that a judge is not satisfied with the efforts of a social worker," Philip Browning said.

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Deputies union warns Baca about releasing records

ROBERT FATURECHI
AND JACK LEONARD

Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca has been warned by the union representing his rank-and-file deputies that he would be violating the law if he releases personnel records to the special commission examining allegations of inmate abuse inside the county's jails.

Disciplinary reports and other internal records have been expected to play a major role in the ongoing investigation by the jail commission, created last year by the county Board of Supervisors to address the growing criticism of the sheriff's lockups. The panel's general counsel said Friday he worried they might have to go to court to get the records.

Baca will consult with the county's attorneys before deciding whether to give the commission access to the records. "The sheriff supports what the commission is doing, but he's not going to violate any laws," Steve Whitmore, the sheriff's spokesman, said Friday.

The jail panel's investigation is loosely modeled on that of the landmark Christopher Commission, which recommended sweeping reforms of the L.A. Police Department after the 1991 beating of Rodney King.

The Board of Supervisors launched the panel soon after news broke last year that the FBI was investigating allegations of inmate abuse and other jailer misconduct. Later this year, the seven-member panel is expected to release a report, based on the work of a cadre

of pro bono attorneys, examining the jail's culture and management.

Access to personnel records is the second major item the deputies union has objected to since the jails commission was formed. The Assn. for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs previously blasted the panel for mulling the idea of allowing deputies to testify anonymously, saying the practice would turn the probe into a "witch hunt." The panel eventually dropped the idea, deciding it cannot guarantee witnesses' confidentiality.

In a recent letter to Baca, the attorney for the largest rank-and-file deputies union expressed opposition to releasing personnel records. The letter argues that the release would violate state laws protecting peace officers' privacy.

"The Sheriff's Department may NOT release any personnel records to this independent commission or it will be acting in violation..." attorney Richard A. Shinee stated in the letter, before going on to threaten specific legal action if the department does release the documents.

Commission staffers expressed optimism that their access to the records, which would provide detailed accounts of force incidents and jailer conduct, would not be derailed.

"I think we'll be able to overcome these objections, but it's conceivable we'll have to go to court," said Richard E. Drooyan, the panel's general counsel.

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Juvenile Court opened to media

WEO 2-1-12 LA Times

Judge says secrecy had allowed problems to fester outside the public's view.

GARRETT THEROLF

Los Angeles County Juvenile Court will be opened to media coverage regularly, with certain exceptions intended to protect the interests of children, under an order issued Tuesday by the court's presiding judge.

Judge Michael Nash said he wanted to open the proceedings because secrecy had allowed problems to fester outside of the public's view. Without access to the courts, news organizations have been forced to rely on incomplete case records released months or years after decisions were made.

Nash's ruling applies to the dependency side of Juvenile Court, which largely means child abuse, foster care and adoption proceedings. The order does not apply to the delinquency side, which handles crimes committed by children.

Under state law, Juvenile Court judges have always been able to open a proceeding if a news organization makes a persuasive argument for it. But the media virtually never prevail.

Nash's order shifts the burden of proof from news organizations to the parties involved in the proceedings. A Juvenile Court proceeding will now be open to reporters unless a compelling case is made to close it in the best interest of the child or children involved.

The burden of proof does not shift for members of the public, however. For them, proceedings will be closed if an objection is raised — unless they demonstrate a legitimate interest in attending or are present at the request of the child or the

child's attorney.

The California Newspaper Publishers Assn. has campaigned for years to open Juvenile Court proceedings. Kelli Sager, an attorney for the Los Angeles Times, told Nash that his order would provide a road map for judges. "For 20 years there has been no process set up ... and the process has been inconsistent or ad hoc at best," Sager said.

Nash, the longest-serving Juvenile Court judge in the state, has long been an advocate for transparency in the courts. He released a draft of his order in November. The proposal sharply divided the child welfare community and brought denunciations from some county supervisors, social worker union leaders and others.

Leslie Starr Heimov, executive director of the Children's Law Center of Califor-

nia, which represents a majority of children in the Los Angeles dependency system, said her firm was considering an appeal to the order.

Before the order was made final, she said her concerns had been largely resolved by revisions made by Nash in recent weeks. But after further reflection, she issued a statement Tuesday that said "there has been no opportunity to address necessary protocols and procedures aimed at ensuring that the child's protection does not take a back seat to public and media access."

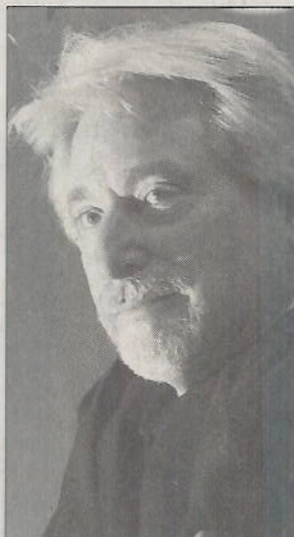
In recent years, a commission led by then-California Supreme Court Justice Carlos Moreno found that hearings on critical placement decisions for abused children commonly lasted 10 to 15 minutes, less than half the recommended duration.

"California's dependency courts are over-stressed and under-resourced, burdened by crowded dockets and inadequate information," the commission wrote.

The child welfare system in Los Angeles has undergone wrenching examination in recent years as cases of government mishandling came to light.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, however, has moved to block access to potentially embarrassing information sought by the news media and state auditors.

County lawyers did not officially oppose Nash's order, but Supervisors Don Knabe and Michael D. Antonovich wrote letters of opposition, saying the order would invade the privacy of abused children. The union representing social workers also opposed the move, say-



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

MICHAEL NASH

His ruling does not apply to cases involving crimes committed by children.

ing it was contrary to the law and that access should be granted only on a case-specific basis.

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Fixing the jails requires a plan

Mon 1-30-12 L A Times

LAST WEEK, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted to apply for a \$100-million state grant to help build a new jail. That's great. The cash-strapped county certainly needs the money. And the overcrowded jails are surely in need of an overhaul.

Men's Central Jail, for example, is bursting with inmates. The aging facility has been described by the American Civil Liberties Union as a "modern-day medieval dungeon" and by a federal judge as "not consistent with basic human values." Twin Towers, a downtown Los Angeles facility built in 1996 to ease overcrowding, has, by contrast, nearly 1,000 empty bunks because of staffing shortages. And the north facility at Pitchess Detention Center that once housed 1,600 detainees now holds just two inmates — another casualty of budget cuts.

Whether the state will provide the funds is unclear. What is obvious, however, is that no one at the county level — not Sheriff Lee Baca, not Chief Executive William T. Fujioka, not even the supervisors — has a sensible plan in hand for how to solve the system's broader problems.

Fujioka's office submitted a \$14-billion plan in November to build two new jails and retrofit a third; it was ultimately voted down

by the board. In making the recommendation, neither Fujioka nor Baca undertook any kind of comprehensive study to determine whether everyone in the jails actually belongs there, or whether cheaper and more effective options exist, including alternatives to incarceration for low-level pretrial inmates. The plan would simply have taken the same number of detainees and housed some of them in new facilities.

But bigger and more expensive jails aren't the only solution. A 2011 study of Los Angeles County jails by the Vera Institute of Justice makes that clear. The report suggests that a significant number of detainees are being held in county jails for failing to pay traffic fines or court fees. It costs up to \$140 a day to house an inmate, according to the report — hardly a cost-effective sanction for such minor offenders. The report also found that some pretrial detainees are held far longer than needed not because they pose a safety risk to communities but because they are simply too poor to make bond. The sheriff has discretion to release them with ankle bracelets.

No one disputes that the county's jails are broken. But asking taxpayers to spend \$14 billion without having a clear and comprehensive understanding of what is needed to solve the problem is irresponsible.

Mon 1-30-12



SHAWN ROCCO Raleigh News & Observer / MCT

IN 1968, Elaine Riddick, right, was sterilized without her consent under a North Carolina program.

Twice a victim

Re "Sterilized by N.C., she felt raped again," Column One, Jan. 26

Who in the world mutilates a 14-year-old rape victim? The Taliban in Afghanistan — and the defunct North Carolina Eugenics Board, which forcibly sterilized Elaine Riddick in 1968. Where in the world does a court refuse to hear the case of this rape victim? In mullah-controlled Iran perhaps — or in the United States, where the Supreme Court refused to hear her appeal in her lawsuit against the board.

We need to be better than the Taliban in this country; our Supreme Court needs to be better than Iran's courts. And to be better, we must talk about Riddick and other victims like her.

There must be national outrage. Victims such as Riddick should be defended not only by the ACLU; they must have the whole nation behind them.

ERGUN KUNTER
Irvine

Never in my life would I have considered that a state government would have a eugenics board that determined who should have the right to reproduce.

No one should choose to cauterize a 14-year-old's fallopian tubes. Riddick was robbed of future children by a government that obviously did not care about her rights, let alone the rights of the other nearly 7,600 people it forced sterilization on.

And 44 years later the state tries to make it up by paying Riddick \$50,000? Pathetic.

All we can do is learn from this and resolve to never again allow such immoral mistreatment.

SEAN MOHR
Santa Clara